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CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:.

1.   A method in a network data processing system for distributed computing, the method comprising:

accepting a task for distributed computing;

sending work units to a plurality of data processing systems on a network, wherein each data processing system within the plurality of data processing systems includes a software for accepting a work unit, processing the work unit to generate a result, and returning the result, wherein the software is monitored for compliance with an operation policy requiring a connection to the network and allocating a period of time for processing work units; and

receiving results from the plurality of data processing systems.

2.   The method of claim 1 further comprising:

assigning each of the plurality of data processing systems to a different user.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein each data processing system within the plurality of data processing systems is in a different location.

4.   A method in a data processing system for distributed computing, the method comprising:

executing a worker application for a selected period of time, wherein the worker application accepts a request

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and processes the request to form a result, and returns the result; and

    monitoring the data processing system for compliance with a policy requiring execution of the worker

5   application for a selected period of time and a presence of a connection to a network.

5.   The method of claim 4 further comprising:

    preventing use of the data processing system if the

10   policy is unmet.

6.   The method of claim 5, wherein the power supply to a processor in the data processing system is cut off to prevent use of the data processing system.

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7.   A method in a data processing system for distributed computing, the method comprising the computer implemented steps of:

    receiving a request for a computer from a user; and

20   initiating shipping of the computer to the user, wherein the computer includes a software for accepting a work unit, processing the work unit to generate a result, and returning the result, wherein the software is monitored for compliance with an operation policy

25   requiring a connection to the network and allocating a period of time for processing work units.

8.   The method of claim 7 further comprising:

    adding the user to a database, wherein the database

30   identifies all users with computers containing the software.

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9. The method of claim 8 further comprising:
   receiving a task;
   assigning work units for the task to users in the
database to form a set of assigned users;
5   sending the work units to the set of assigned users.

10. The method of claim 7 further comprising:
   billing the user a reduced price for the computer.

10 11. The method of claim 7, wherein the initiating step
includes sending an electronic message to a shipping
company to deliver the computer to the user.

12. A data processing system comprising:
15   a bus system;
   a communications unit connected to the bus system;
   a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the
memory includes as set of instructions; and
   a processing unit connected to the bus system,
20 wherein the processing unit executes the set of
instructions to accept a task for distributed computing;
send work units to a plurality of data processing systems
on a network, wherein each data processing system within
the plurality of data processing systems includes a
25 software for accepting a work unit, processing the work
unit to generate a result, and returning the result,
wherein the software is monitored for compliance with an
operation policy requiring a connection to the network
and allocating a period of time for processing work
30 units; and receive results from the plurality of data
processing systems.

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13. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the

5 memory includes as set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system,

wherein the processing unit executes the set of

instructions to execute a worker application for a

selected period of time, wherein the worker application

10 accepts a request and processes the request to form a

result, and returns the result; and monitor the data

processing system for compliance with a policy requiring

execution of the worker application for a selected period

of time and a presence of a connection to a network.

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14. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the

20 memory includes as set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system,

wherein the processing unit executes the set of

instructions to receive a request for a computer from a

user; and initiate shipping of the computer to the user,

25 wherein the computer includes a software for accepting a

work unit, processing the work unit to generate a result,

and returning the result, wherein the software is

monitored for compliance with an operation policy

requiring a connection to the network and allocating a

30 period of time for processing work units.

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15. A data processing system for distributed computing, the data processing system comprising:

accepting means for accepting a task for distributed computing;

5 sending means for sending work units to a plurality of data processing systems on a network, wherein each data processing system within the plurality of data processing systems includes a software for accepting a work unit, processing the work unit to generate a result,

10 and returning the result, wherein the software is monitored for compliance with an operation policy requiring a connection to the network and allocating a period of time for processing work units; and

receiving means for receiving results from the

15 plurality of data processing systems.

16. The data processing system of claim 15 further comprising:

assigning means for assigning each of the plurality

20 of data processing systems to a different user.

17. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein each data processing system within the plurality of data processing systems is in a different location.

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18. A data processing system for distributed computing, the data processing system comprising:

executing means for executing a worker application for a selected period of time, wherein the worker

30 application accepts a request and processes the request to form a result, and returns the result; and

monitoring means for monitoring the data processing

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system for compliance with a policy requiring execution
of the worker application for a selected period of time
and a presence of a connection to a network.

5   19.   The data processing system of claim 18 further
comprising:
        preventing means for preventing use of the data
processing system if the policy is unmet.

10   20.   The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the
power supply to a processor in the data processing system
is cut off to prevent use of the data processing system.

     21.   A data processing system for distributed computing,
15   the data processing system comprising:
        receiving means for receiving a request for a
computer from a user; and
        initiating means for initiating shipping of the
computer to the user, wherein the computer includes a
20   software for accepting a work unit, processing the work
unit to generate a result, and returning the result,
wherein the software is monitored for compliance with an
operation policy requiring a connection to the network
and allocating a period of time for processing work
25   units.

     22.   The data processing system of claim 21 further
comprising:
        adding means for adding the user to a database,
30   wherein the database identifies all users with computers
containing the software.

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23. The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the receiving means is a first receiving means and further comprising:

second receiving means for receiving a task;

5   assigning means for assigning work units for the task to users in the database to form a set of assigned users;

sending means for sending the work units to the set of assigned users.

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24. The data processing system of claim 21 further comprising:

billing means for billing the user a reduced price for the computer.

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25. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for distributed computing, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for accepting a task for

20   distributed computing;

second instructions for sending work units to a plurality of data processing systems on a network, wherein each data processing system within the plurality of data processing systems includes a software for

25   accepting a work unit, processing the work unit to generate a result, and returning the result, wherein the software is monitored for compliance with an operation policy requiring a connection to the network and allocating a period of time for processing work units;

30   and

third instructions for receiving results from the plurality of data processing systems.

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26. A computer program product in a computer readable
medium for distributed computing, the computer program
product comprising:

5   first instructions for executing a worker
application for a selected period of time, wherein the
worker application accepts a request and processes the
request to form a result, and returns the result; and
           second instructions for monitoring the data
10 processing system for compliance with a policy requiring
execution of the worker application for a selected period
of time and a presence of a connection to a network.

27. A computer program product in a computer readable
15 medium for distributed computing, the computer program
product comprising:
           first instructions for receiving a request for a
computer from a user; and
           second instructions for initiating shipping of the
20 computer to the user, wherein the computer includes a
software for accepting a work unit, processing the work
unit to generate a result, and returning the result,
wherein the software is monitored for compliance with an
operation policy requiring a connection to the network
25 and allocating a period of time for processing work
units.